(c) and (d) A Committee of Secretaries (COS) headed by Cabinet Secretary has been constituted to resolve the issues related to bottlenecks in the ongoing projects and Central-State and Inter-Ministerial coordination. The Committee has already started functioning to tackle the various problems including delay in the acquisition of land

Meeting of National Shipping Board

4615. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state

(a) whether it is a fact that the 105th meeting of the National Shipping Board was held recently,

(b) the recommendations made by the Board on the coastal shipping, regulation of shipping lines, off shore and marine logistic support services;

(c) the other major recommendations made by the Board, and

(d) in what manner the recommendations are going to boost maritime operations in the country?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The National Shipping Board in its 105th meeting has recommended for exemption of customs' duty on bunkers and spares required for coastal vessels Detailed discussions on regulation of shipping lines, off shore and marine logistic support services could not take place.Consequently, no recommendations could be made.

(c) However, other major recommendations made by the Board are as under:—

(i) Automatic Identification System (AIS) should be introduced. This system requires on board a ship technology capable of providing information about a ship to other ships and to coastal authorities, automatically. In India introduction of AIS is very much essential for ensuring effective security of marine trade and bringing Indian monitoring system at par with other maritime nations.

(ii) Concrete efforts should be made to prevent spurious distress calls. Spurious calls on the distress frequency have become a

common occurrence in the recent past. In order to prevent such calls, an awareness campaign is needed to educate mariners.

(d) Maritime operations in the country get enhanced by way of increase in tonnage and due to expansion of exim trade. Recommendations of National Shipping Board as at (b) and (c) above may also facilitate the growth of maritime operations in the country.

Conversion of Highways into six lanes

4616. SHRI S.M.LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have made plans to convert some highway sectors to six lane highways;

(b) if so, whether all such conversion to six lane highways would be clubbed under NHDP-V to cover 5,000 kms;

(c) the States where the NHDP-V would be implemented;

(d) the extent of lengths which would be converted into six lanes; and

(e) whether cost-benefit studies have been done for conversion to six lane highways from four lane highways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA): (a) and (b) The Committee on Infrastructure, set up by the Government, has considered a presentation made by the Planning Commission involving programmes with a total investment of Rs. 1,72,000 crore for upgradation of National Highways in next seven years (2005-2012). Six laning of around 5000 kms under National Highways Development Project (NHDP) Phase V is one of the seven programmes included in the proposal.

(c) to (e) It is too early to give the details for NHDP Phase V.

Road Projects under BOT System

4617. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a facts that Government had decided that all future projects of NHAI under NHDP-III, NHDP-IV and NHDP-V would be taken up totally under BOT system;